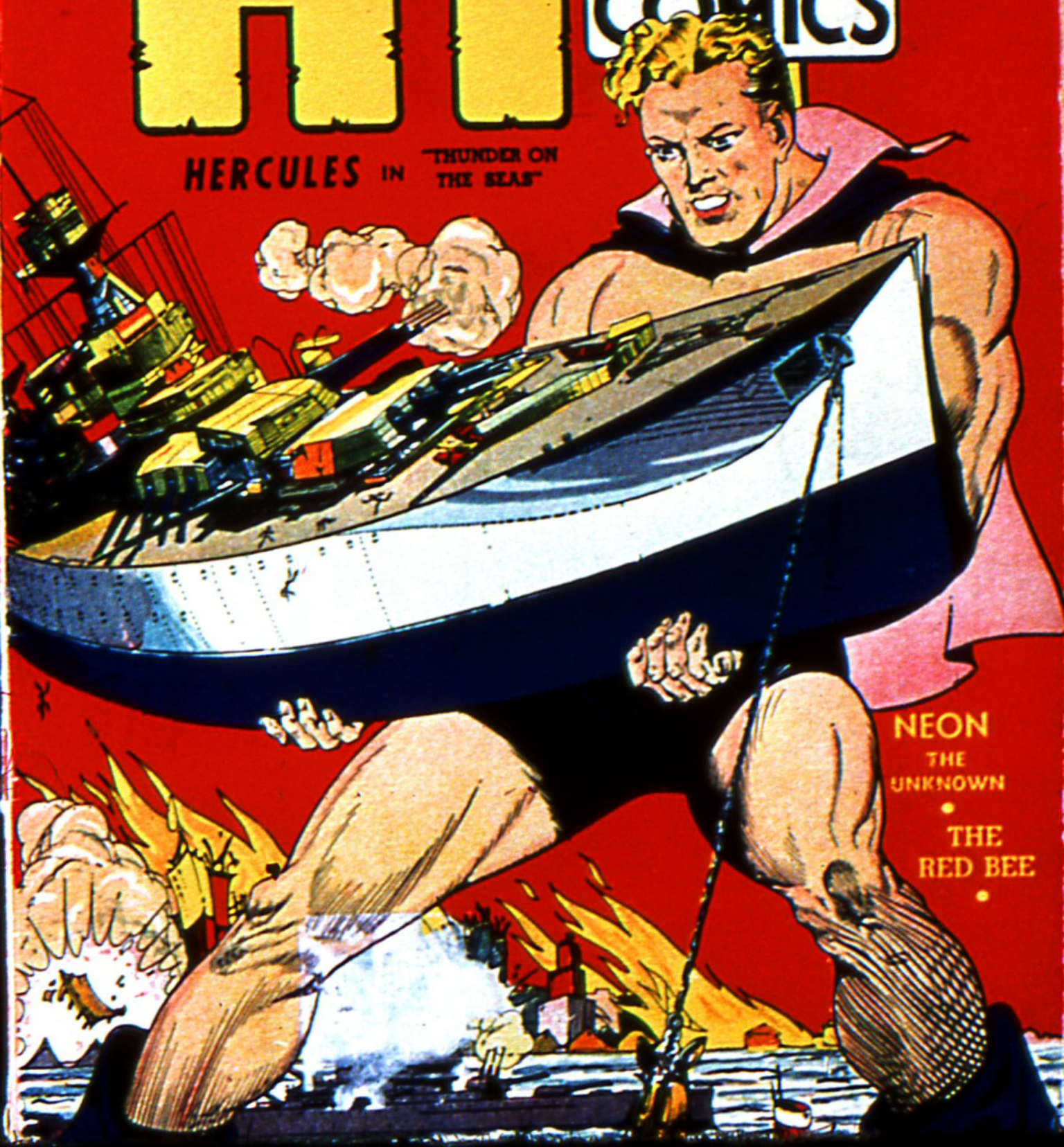


SEPTEMBER No.3

10¢

HIT COMICS

HERCULES IN "THUNDER ON THE SEAS"



NEON
THE
UNKNOWN
•
THE
RED BEE
•



WEB COMIC
UNIVERSE.COM

UNCLE SAM



ONE THOUSAND SAVAGE MORDS
AGAINST FOUR STALWART MEN
IN THE FASTEST ACTION PLOT IN
UNCLE SAM'S CAREER!



WATCH FOR THIS COVER

NATIONAL COMICS 10¢



PEN MILLER
SMASHES A VICIOUS
MURDER RING!

SMASH ACTION



WONDER BOY
RESCUES AN EXPLORER
IN THE HEART OF A SOUTH
AMERICAN JUNGLE!



KID DIXON LANDS IN NEW YORK AND
PUNCHES HIS WAY TO THE CHAMPIONSHIP!

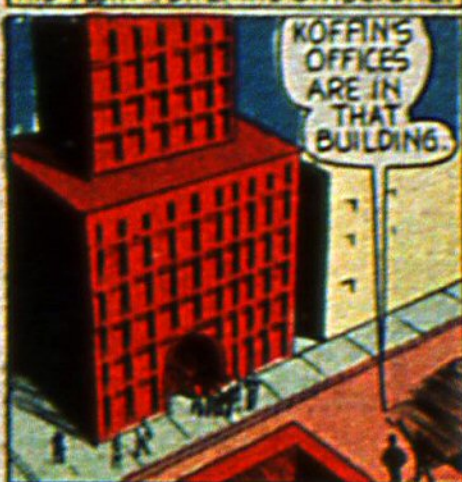
SALLY O'NEIL
MERLIN THE MAGICIAN
CYCLONE
KID PATROL
PROP POWERS
PAUL BUNYAN



BUT SUDDENLY THE CAR NOSES UPWARD.



BIRCH LEADS HERCULES TO A MID-TOWN TOWERING STRUCTURE.



KOFFIN'S OFFICES ARE IN THAT BUILDING.

ENTERING THE BUILDING, THEY SCAN THE DIRECTORY.



H.M. THEY'RE ON THE TOP FLOOR.

IN THE ANTE ROOM, A STUBBORN RECEPTIONIST CONFRONTS THEM.



HAVE YOU AN APPOINTMENT TO SEE MR. KOFFIN?



I'M SORRY, MISS!

HOW DARE YOU?! I PUT ME DOWN THIS INSTANT!

HE SEATS HER ATOP A HIGH CABINET.



THERE! YOU CAN COOL OFF UP HERE! ON MY WAY OUT I'LL TAKE YOU DOWN.

AS HERCULES PASSES THROUGH THE DOOR, THE SECRETARY STOPS HIM.



I COMMAND YOU TO LEAVE IMMEDIATELY!



RUN ALONG, LITTLE MAN! CAN'T YOU SEE YOU'RE NOT MY SIZE?

SAY, WHO'S THAT?



I DUNNO, AN I AIN'T ASKIN' QUESTIONS! I'LL LET MY GAT TALK!



NOT THIS TIME, BOYS!

THE TWO THUGS FIND THEMSELVES MAKING A QUICK EXIT.



TSK TSK, BOYS! WHY THE RUSH?

FINALLY, HERCULES ENTERS KOFFIN'S PRIVATE SANCTUM.



HELLO, BURNS! SORRY TO CRASH THE PARTY!

WHAT? WHO ARE YOU?

THE BIG CHIEF IS IMPRESSED BY HERCULES' STRENGTH.



YOU CERTAINLY WERE GOOD TO GET PAST MY ENTRANCE.

YES, HEH-HEH-HEH! I CAN USE A MAN LIKE YOU!



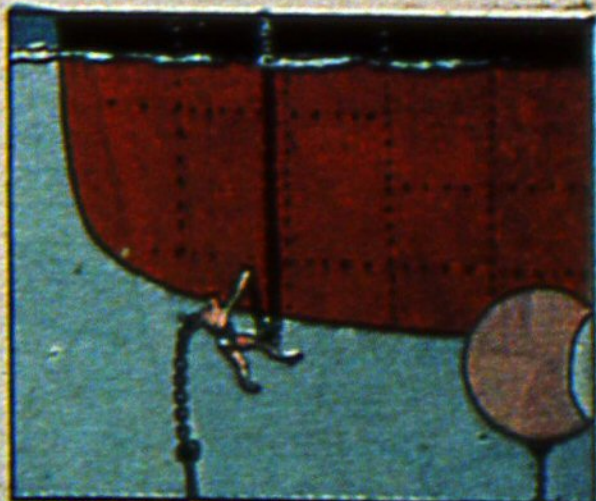


LIKE A KNIFE, HERCULES' BODY CUTS THROUGH THE WATER.



SAY! HE'S CUT THE MOORING!

WONDER WHAT HE WENT UNDER FOR?

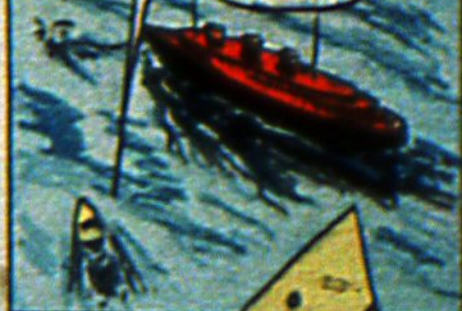


SLOWLY THE MAJESTIC VESSEL IS TOWED FROM DANGER.

AFTER HIM, MUSS! WE GOTTA STOP HIM!



STEP ON IT, JAKE! I'LL FILL HIM SO FULL OF LEAD THAT THE SHARKS WILL BREAK THEIR TEETH ON HIM!



ALL RIGHT BOYS, AND DON'T SPARE THE SLUGS!



HERCULES DUCKS.

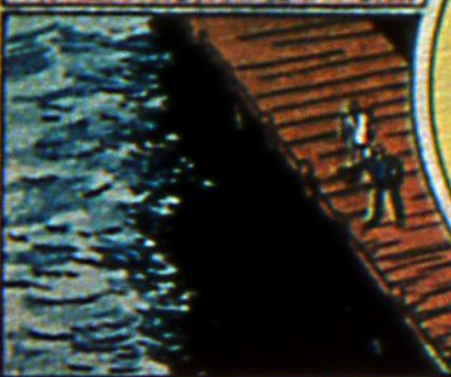


WHAT TH?

COME ON IN, BOYS. THE WATER'S FINE!



THE SHIP IS ANCHORED IN SAFE WATER, BUT THE SKIPPER, NOT REALIZING THE MEANING OF PAST EVENTS, RAGES IN FURY.



THAT'S AN OUTRAGE! I'LL REPORT IT.

CAPTAIN! LOOK!



AT EXACTLY EIGHT O'CLOCK, THE HARBOR FLOOR SEEMS TO RISE. A THUNDERING GEYSER OF WATER AND DEBRIS SHOOT INTO THE AIR....



WHY! HE SAVED OUR SHIP!

MEANWHILE, HERCULES, MAKING HIS WAY TO THE DOCK IS MET BY A VOLLEY OF LEAD.

BLAST HIM WIDE OPEN!

HEY! ULP, ER!!

BANG

WHY YOU RUNT! DON'T YOU KNOW THAT GUNS BACKFIRE SOMETIMES?



WITH VERY LITTLE DIFFICULTY, HERCULES BEATS DOWN HIS ARMED Foes

SO YOU WANTED TO BLAST ME WIDE OPEN, EH?

NO! PLEASE! I WAS KIDDING!

AT THIS POINT, SIRENS ANNOUNCE THE HARBOR POLICE.

LOOKS LIKE THERE WAS A FIGHT HERE!

A FIGHT? YOU MEAN A TORNADO?

HERCULES!

YOU'RE JUST IN TIME TO TAKE THEM IN. ONE GOT AWAY!

GOSH, WE DON'T HAVE ROOM FOR THEM IN THE CAR.



SAVING YOU THE TROUBLE OF TAKING THEM AWAY!

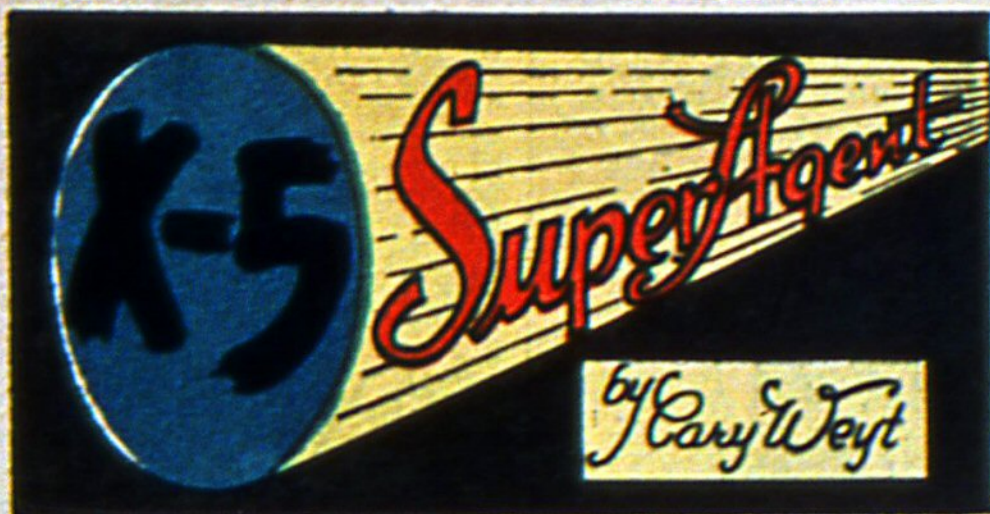
OW!

HEY! NOT SO TIGHT!

AND, JUST AS THOUGH THEY WERE FEATHERS, HERCULES SWINGS THEM OVER HIS SHOULDER

OFF TO JAIL WE MUST GO, WE MUST GO!





HIS ATTENTION WANDERS TO A SLEEN WEASEL-LIKE MAN SITTING ALONE.



SUDDENLY HE STIGGERS TO HIS FEET AND SHOUTS SHRILLY.



TWO BURLY WAITERS RUSH TOWARD THE SCREAMING MAN...



ROUGHLY THEY HUSTLE THE MAN INTO A BACK ROOM WHERE HE IS QUICKLY SILENCED...



THE MANAGER APOLOGIZES...



SUSPICIOUS OF THE MANAGER'S OBVIOUS ANXIETY, X-5 INVESTIGATES THE ALLEY IN BACK OF THE GARDEN...



X-5 VIEWS A STRANGE SIGHT...



FOOL! YOU WOULD GIVE US AWAY... WE PUT YOU IN CHARGE OF GETTING RIFLES.



YOU WILL ANSWER FOR THIS IN THE HOMETLAND! THE "LEADER" WILL HEAR OF IT, AND THEN... A BOAT LEAVES TO-NIGHT!

IT WAS STEALING... STEALING FROM THE NATIONAL GUARD!



X-5 WATCHES THE FOREIGN AGENTS BRUTAL TREATMENT OF THE MAN WHO REFUSED TO STEAL AMMUNITION FROM OUR GOVERNMENT!

WE'LL TAKE HIM BACK TO THE FATHERLAND!



THAT NIGHT A BOAT IS LOADED WITH A MYSTERIOUS CARGO AND A HUDDLED FIGURE IS LED ABOARD.



X-5 IS DETERMINED TO MAKE THE VOYAGE ON THE FOREIGN SHIP IN DISGUISE.

I ALWAYS LOVED THE SEA.



I'M YOUR NEW THIRD MATE, JUST TRANSFERRED FROM THE S.S. BORTIC.

GOT YOUR PAPERS?



THE DISGUISED X-5 SAILS ON THE AMMUNITION LADEN SHIP FOR A FOREIGN PORT.

HERE ARE MY PAPERS, SIR.

HM... JA! YOUR QUARTERS ARE ON A DECK.



AND THE DEPARTING SHIP CARRIES THE IMPRISONED OBJECTING AGENT.



X-5 WATCHES THE HEAVILY GUARDED CABIN.

IMPOSSIBLE TO GET TO THE GUY! I'LL WAIT MY CHANCE.



SUDDENLY AN ALARM RINGS OUT!

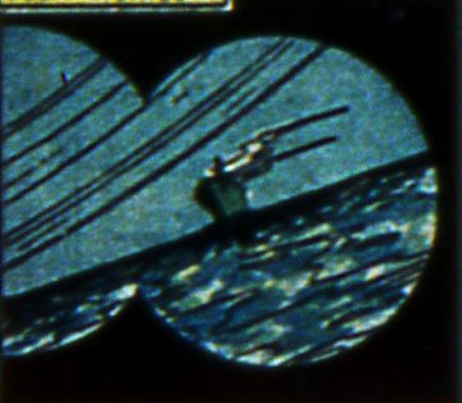
WHAT'S THAT FOR IF I'VE BEEN DISCOVERED.



SOMEONE MUST BE WISE TO ME!



BUT IT IS NOT X-5 THAT CAUSES THE ALARM. AN ENEMY DESTROYER HAS BEEN SIGHTED!



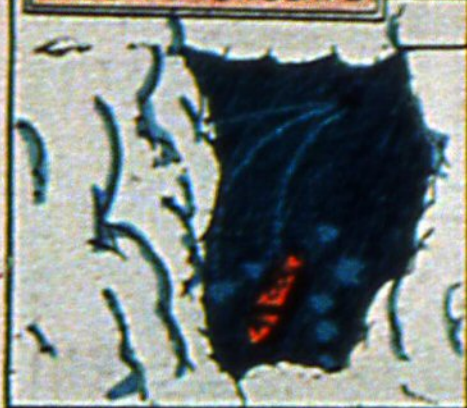
THE FREIGHTER GOES AT TOP SPEED.



BUT SHE IS SIGHTED AND THE DESTROYER OPENS FIRE. A WARNING SHOT SCREAMS ACROSS THE BOW.



THE SHIP MAKES A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE



A PROTECTIVE FOG BANK FALLS ON THE WATER AND THE FREIGHTER DUCKS INTO IT.



BILBAO, SPAIN/AND I STILL HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET NEAR THE PRISONER/X-5 MY BOY, YOU'RE SLIPPING.



X-5 LEAVES THE SHIP AND DASHES THROUGH THE PICTURESQUE, WINDING STREETS....



IN SPAIN X-5 MAKES A HURRIED VISIT TO THE U.S. MINISTER IN BILBAO.



LATER ON THE SHIP



WE WILL GIVE YOU SAFE PASSAGE BACK TO THE U.S.A.



I-ER-NO-NO! I WANT TO GO BACK TO MY FATHERLAND NOT AMERICA / PLEASE GO AWAY!

BACK AT THE U.S. LEGATION....



HE REFUSED TO LEAVE. OBVIOUS INTIMIDATION!

WELL, WHAT DID THEY DO TO HIM?



THEY'VE FRIGHTENED HIM INTO SUBMISSION.

I'LL HAVE TO STOP THEM BEFORE THEY LEAVE SPAIN.



WHILE X-5 WATCHES, THE STOLEN RIFLES ARE UNLOADED AND THE PRISONER BUNDLED INTO A WAITING CAR.



HE TRAILS THEM TO A HIDDEN AIRPORT.



I CAN GET A PLANE TO FOLLOW THEM IN BEFORE THE TRUCK ARRIVES WITH THE STOLEN RIFLES.

X-5 HAS TRAILED THE SPIES TO THEIR SECRET PLANE.



HE HIRES A PLANE AND FLIES BACK IN TIME TO SEE THEM LOADING THEIR SHIP.



INSIDE THE ENEMY PLANE...



AS THE PLANE TAKES OFF, X-5 CIRCLES ABOVE IN THE CLOUDS.



HOT ON THE TRAIL OF THE SPY PLANE X-5 SPEEDS ACROSS EUROPE TO THE WARRING COUNTRY OF BOTHNIA.



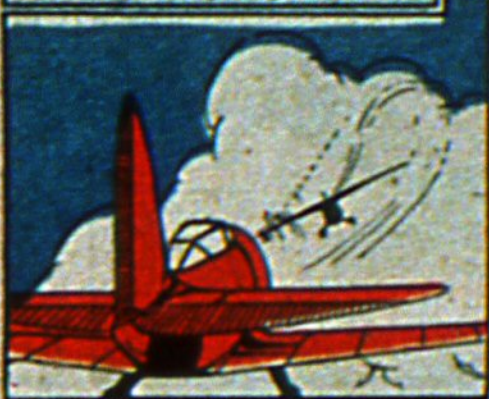
HOURS LATER....



HE'S BANKING AROUND NOW FOR A GOOD OLD FASHIONED DOG-FIGHT!



THE ENEMY SHIP BANKS OVER AND COMES HEAD ON TOWARD X-5!



HE'D BETTER BANK AWAY, BECAUSE I'M NOT!



THE FOOL! IF HE DOESN'T GIVE WAY...



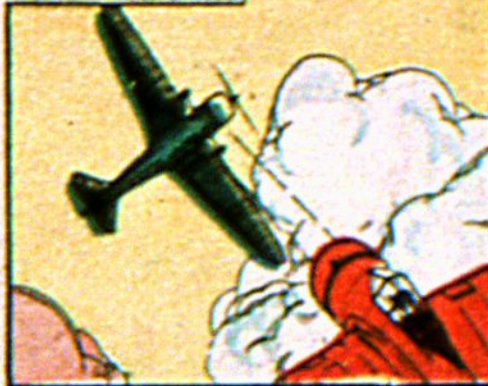
ALMOST "PROP" TO "PROP" THEY SPEED TOWARD CERTAIN DEATH!



AS THE PLANES DRAW CLOSER, NEITHER PILOT ATTEMPTS TO CHANGE HIS COURSE.



AT THE LAST MOMENT THE ENEMY SHIP ROLLS OVER AND X-5 LETS THEM HAVE IT!



THAT'S DONE IT! PUNCTURED THEIR OIL LINE!



LANDING X-5 TAXIS UP TO THE DISABLED PLANE.



COME OUT, I'VE GOT YOU COVERED!

AND THE BOTHNIANS ARE FORCED TO SURRENDER AT THE POINT OF X-5'S GUN.



THE CAPTURED AMERICAN, FRED RICKS, IS SET FREE.



DON'T YOU THINK KIDNAPPING WAS A BIT OUT OF YOUR LINE OF GUN RUNNING? FRISK THEM, RICKS!



NOW THEN, REPAIR THE OIL LINE. YOU'RE GOING TO FLY US RIGHT TO THE BASE IN YOUR OWN PLANE, JUST AS IF EVERYTHING WERE O.K.. GET GOING!!



KEEP THAT GUY COVERED WITH MY TOMMY GUN, RICKS!

AND THE PILOT IS FORCED TO OBEY.



SUDDENLY THE TOMMY GUN IS SNATCHED FROM RICKS' GRASP.



HEY!

AT THE SAME TIME THE PILOT DROPS INTO A NOSE DIVE, THROWING X-5 AGAINST THE WALL.



ALL RIGHT RICKS, THIS TIME WE WON'T WAIT TILL WE REACH THE FATHERLAND. YOU SHALL DIE NOW!!



THE TABLES ARE TURNED. X-5 AND FRED RICKS ARE AT THE MERCY OF THE BOTHNIAN SPIES.



JACK AND JILL

By Lowell Riggs

DETECTIVE JACK DOE, STROLLING HOME AT THE CLOSE OF A DAY.



PASSES A SLEEK BLACK CAR PARKED ON THE STREET.



JUST THE TWO OF US. OH-OH... TROUBLE!



SORRY BUT MY DINNER'S GETTIN' COLD!



A LOOKOUT SPOTS A POLICE BROWL CAR.



AND JACK'S ATTACKERS ARE OFF IN A CLOUD OF CARBON MONOXIDE.



LATER

WE GOT TO GET RID OF THAT COP. HE'S GETTIN' TO KNOW TOO MUCH!



JACK REACHES HOME.



GUESS WHAT? YOUR AUNT AGATHA JUST PHONED FROM THE STATION. SHE'S COMING TO VISIT US FOR AWHILE. NOW JACK, BE NICE! YOU KNOW HOW RICH SHE IS.



AFTER TWO MONTHS

SAY, DOESN'T AUNT AGGIE EVER LOOK AT THE DATE?

NOW, JACK, SHE BOUGHT US MANY LOVELY GIFTS.

COME COME, GIRL! DON'T CHATTER YOUR LIFE AWAY. THERE'S SHOPPING TO BE DONE!

SCENE: AN EXCLUSIVE JEWELRY SHOP

SOMETHING MORE EXPENSIVE? YES, MADAM, AT ONCE!

AUNT AGATHA, YOU'RE REALLY TOO KIND!

LATER...

THE PEARLS THE STRING THEY DIDN'T BUY! THEY'RE GONE!

GET THOSE TWO WOMEN!

O.K. I'LL STEER THEM TO THE MANAGER'S OFFICE!

IN THE MANAGER'S OFFICE

IT'S HERE, ALL RIGHT! IN THE LADY'S PURSE

WHY, BUT HOW DID THAT GET THERE?

WE'LL JUST SAY IT WAS AN ACCIDENT, MADAM. YOU'LL BE MORE CAREFUL NEXT TIME, WON'T YOU?

DO YOU KNOW, MR. MANAGER, MY NIECE HAS ALL SORTS OF PRETTY NECKLACES HIDDEN IN THE FUNNIEST PLACES IN THE HOUSE.

I'LL SEND THE POLICE AFTER THEM.

YOU NEVER SHOULD HAVE LET HER GO. SHE LOOKED LIKE AN OLD HAND AT THE GAME!

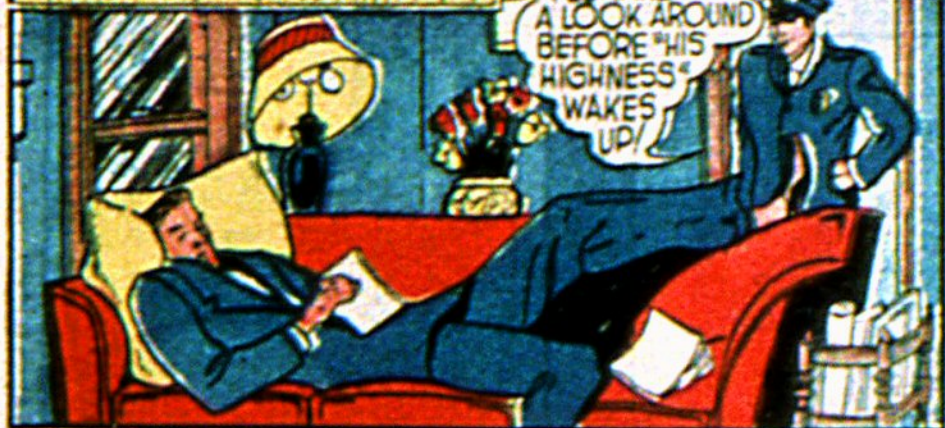
PICK UP JILL DOE!

WHY, THAT'S JACK'S WIFE! WHAT TH?

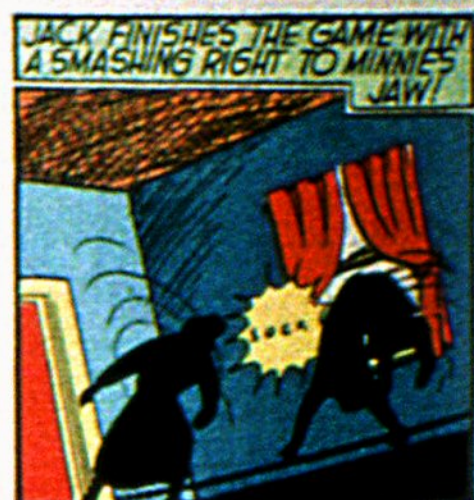
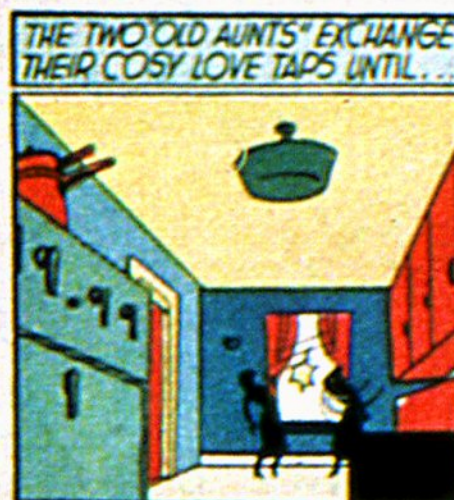
P.D.

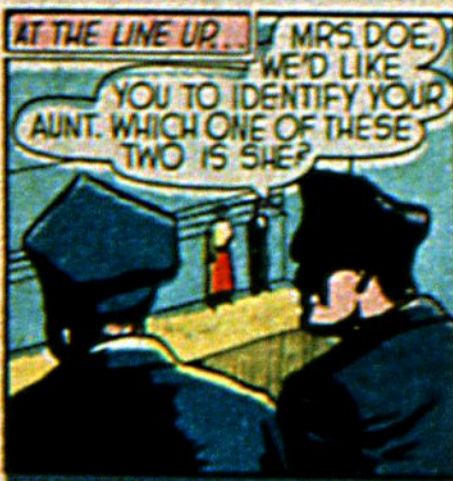
SORRY JILL, THEY WANT YOU DOWN AT HEADQUARTERS!


MEANWHILE THE COPS INVESTIGATE AUNT AGATHA'S HELPFUL HINT.











The RED BEE

THE RED BEE, CHALLENGER OF CRIME AND INJUSTICE, DISCOVERS A PHOTOGRAPH WHICH ENABLES HIM TO SMASH A POWERFUL RACKET AND AVENGE THE MURDER OF A PHOTOGRAPHER.

BY B.H. APIARY

CONSTRUCTION WORK DISCONTINUED FOR THE DAY, ONLY A NEWS PHOTOGRAPHER REMAINS AT A PARTIALLY COMPLETED STRUCTURE



USING CITY SUPPLIES TO CONSTRUCT PRIVATE HOUSES! WAIT TILL...



HERE'S HIS CAMERA SMASHED TO BITS! LOOK! THE NEGATIVES MIGHT BE GOOD!



OKAY POP, THANKS FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE!



LATER, IN THE OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY



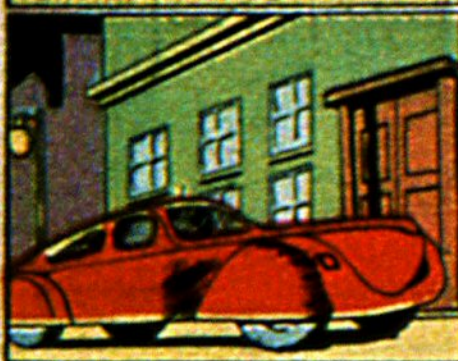
ONE PICTURE IS PARTICULARLY STARTLING!



CHIEF, MAY I KEEP THESE?



THE RED BEE'S SLEEK CAR PULLS UP BEFORE THE HOME OF HENRY GRAFF, PRESIDENT OF A LARGE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY.



DON'T WORRY, FRED. THEY HAVEN'T A SINGLE CLUE TO THE MURDER! OKAY, HANG UP!



WHAT? HOW DID YOU GET IN?

THESE PICTURES MAY INTEREST YOU, GRAFF!



WHY, IT'S A SHOT OF MY TRUCK UNLOADING LUMBER AT THE NEW HOUSE I'M HAVING BUILT.

NOT YOUR TRUCK, GRAFF. THE CITY'S TRUCK!



WHEN THE PHOTOGRAPHER DISCOVERED THAT YOU WERE USING THE CITY'S SUPPLIES, YOU HAD HIM MURDERED!



AND THIS CHECK WON'T MAKE ME DROP THE MATTER. YOU'RE GOING TO THE CHAIR!



SUDDENLY GRAFF THROWS THE TOP DRAWER OF HIS DESK OPEN AND SNATCHES AN AUTOMATIC.

NOT SO FAST, GRAFF!



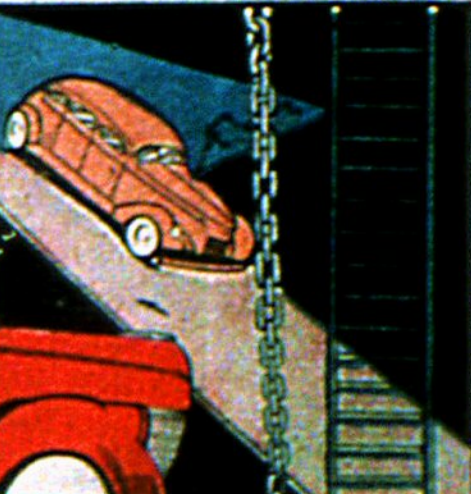
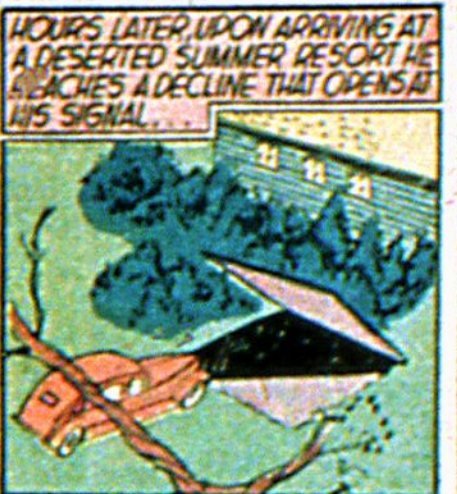
LET GO OF ME! I MEANT NO HARM!

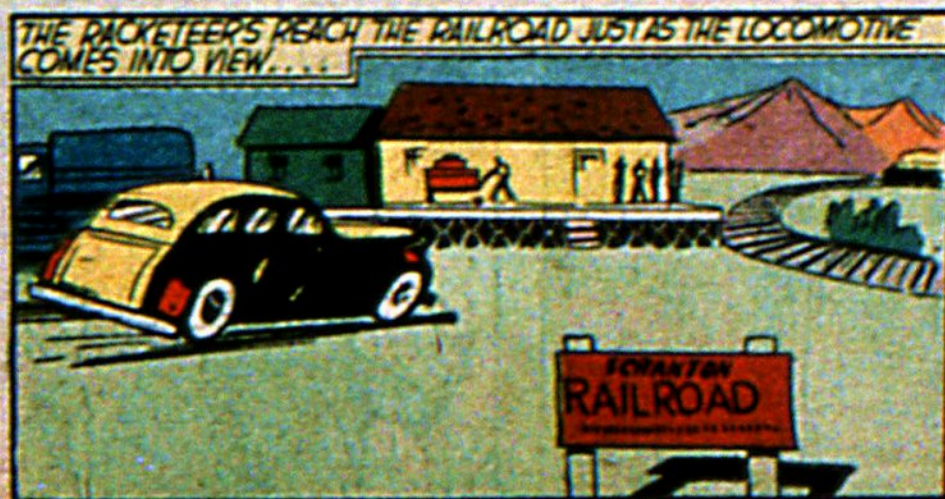


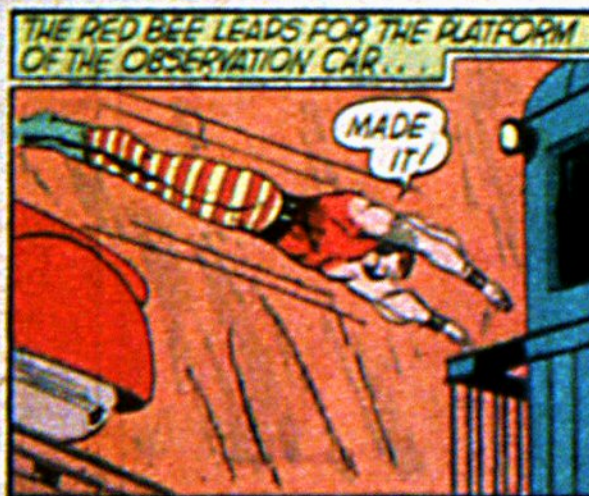
SO? YOU'VE NOT MET MY LITTLE FRIEND MICHAEL, BEFORE!

HE'S OUT COLD NOW! ...I'LL HAVE TO FIND THE RAT WHO DID THE ACTUAL KILLING!



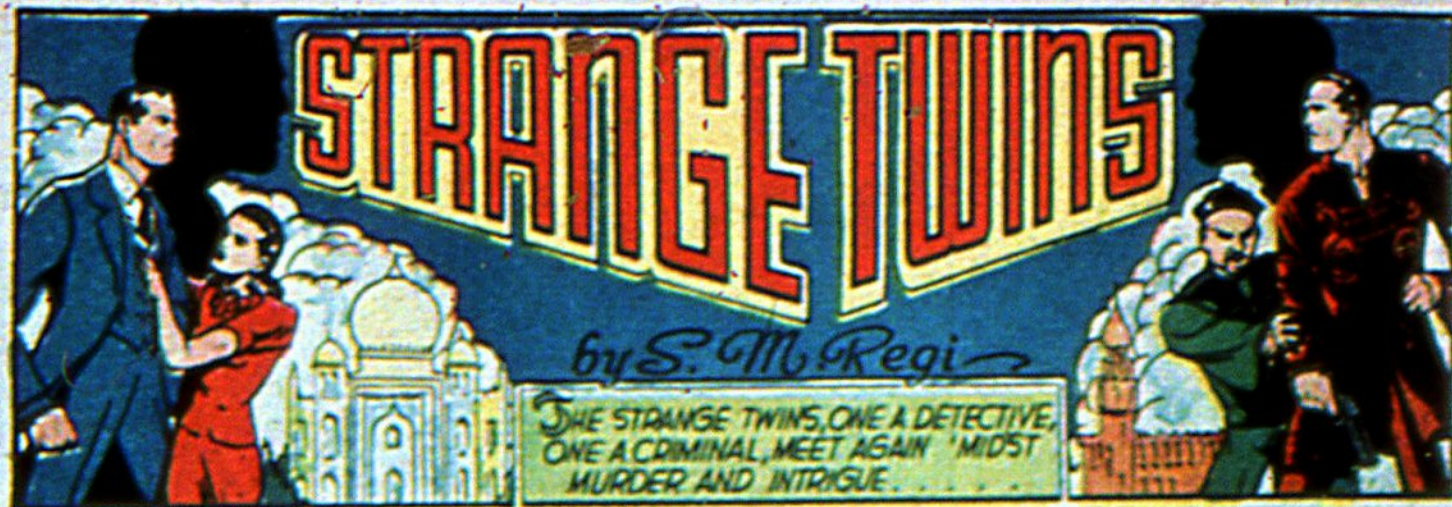








DON'T MISS THE NEXT RED BEE STORY!



INDIAN RAJAS, BRITISH COLONIAL OFFICERS, AND EXOTIC WOMEN ARE AMONG THE GUESTS AT LADY CLUTNEY'S DINNER...

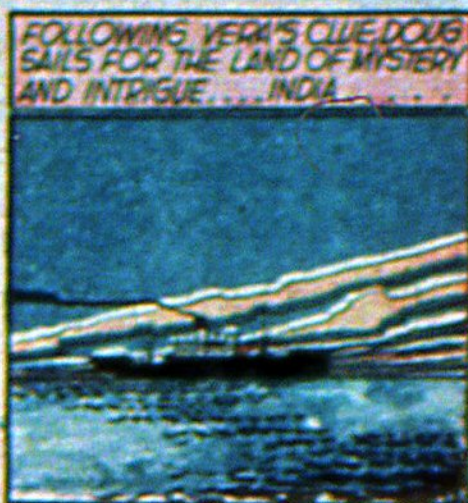


INSPECTOR DOUGLAS STRANGE OF SCOTLAND YARD IS ALSO PRESENT...



SUDDENLY A LOVELY WOMAN FACES HIM...





FROM BOMBAY DOUG TRAVELS TO CALCUTTA IN SEARCH OF ROD...



ROD THE CRIMINAL DOUBT OF DOUGLAS STRANGE, IS IN CALCUTTA ONLY A FEW YARDS AWAY...



I WANT HIM ERASED! IF YOU SEE ME WALK PAST THE EMBASSY A FEW MINUTES BEFORE HE DRIVES UP GET HIM! DON'T SHOOT UNLESS YOU SEE ME, UNDERSTAND?



THAT EVENING WATCHFUL AND WAITING FIGURES LINGER IN THE SHADOWS...



DOUGLAS STRANGE STROLLS THROUGH THE STREETS OF CALCUTTA...



AND PASSES THE EMBASSY BUILDING!



TWO MINUTES LATER THE CAPTAIN'S CAR DRIVES PAST...



ROD'S GANG OF CUTTHROATS LEAD INTO ACTION...



WHAT TH'Y? LOOKS LIKE A RIOT/MAYBE THEY NEED HELP!



DOUG BATTLES THE HINDUS WITH SWIFT TELLING BLOWS...



PUZZLED BEYOND BELIEF, ROD'S HENCHMEN GAZE AT DOUG...



SEEKING THEIR COMPANIONS BEATEN, THE REST OF THE TERRIFIED ATTACKERS FLEE IN ALL DIRECTIONS.



THEY ARE FROM ROD WING LOW'S GANG, THE MOST VICIOUS THUGS IN ALL INDIA!



MEANWHILE...



DOUG STRANGE IS HERE IN CALCUTTA! HERE SHOOT ANY MAN IN TOWN WHO LOOKS LIKE ME!



BUT OLD WING LOW GIVES HIM WISE COUNCIL...



MEANWHILE DOUG TRACKS DOWN THE SOURCE OF VERA DE VAIN'S NECKLACE, HOPING THAT IT WILL LEAD HIM TO ROD...



THIS DISTRICT LOOKS LIKE A GOOD PLACE FOR A DOPE RING!



WHY I BELIEVE I DID SELL THOSE BEADS... JUST A MOMENT, PLEASE.



THE JEWELER GOES TO THE REAR OF THE SHOP AND SIGNALS TO ROD'S HENCHMEN



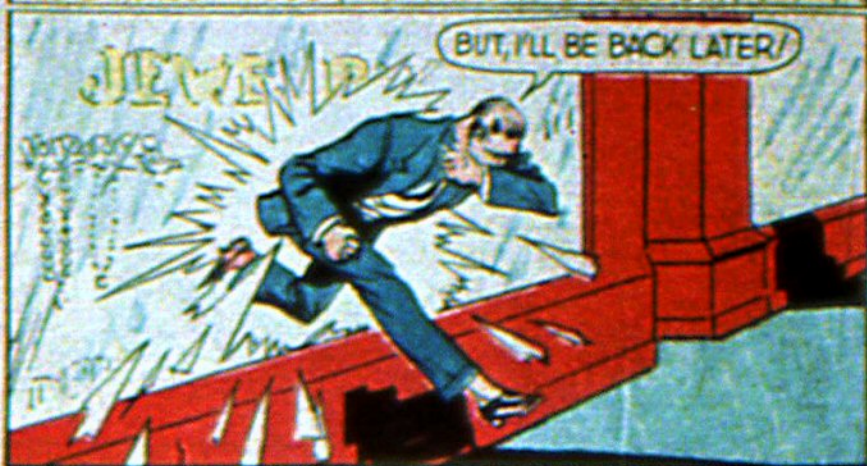
AGAIN ROD'S MEN ATTEMPT ASSAULT!



ALWAYS PREPARED FOR SUCH ACTION, DOUG EASILY THROWS THE MEN OFF.



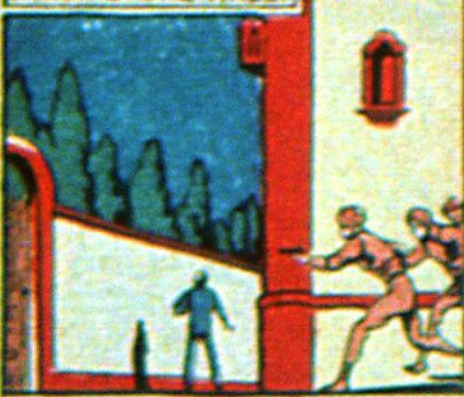
AND CRASHES THROUGH THE WINDOW TO FREEDOM.



FRANTICALLY, THE THUGS CHASE HIM THROUGH WINDING ALLEY-LIKE STREETS...



DOUG KEEPS AN EASY LEAD UNTIL HE IS STOPPED BY A DEAD END... A HIGH STONE WALL.



ONLY ONE WAY TO TACKLE THIS OBSTACLE, OVER IT!



HE DROPS INTO A HINDU GARDEN OF RARE AND EXOTIC BEAUTY.



I AM NOT ROD, ALTHOUGH I LOOK LIKE HIM! TELL ME, WHY DO YOU FEAR HIM?

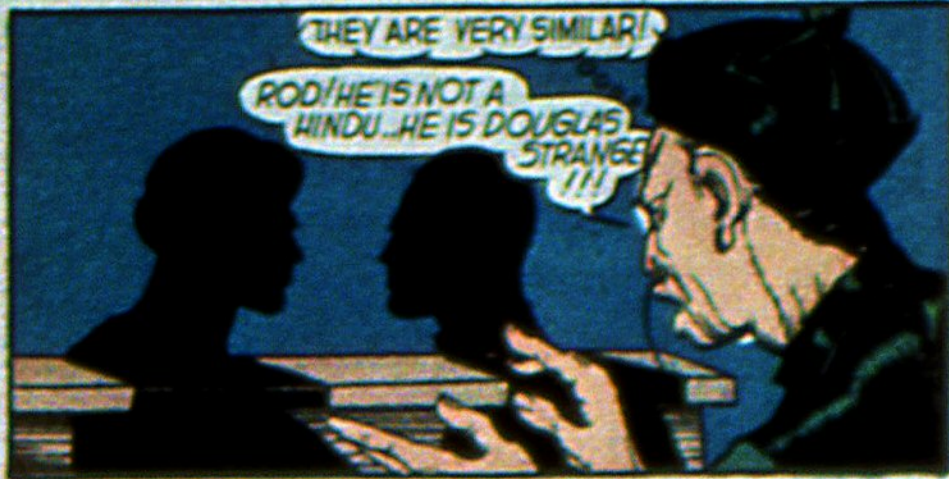
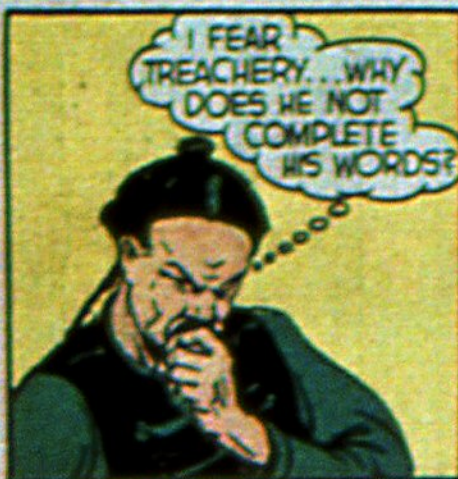
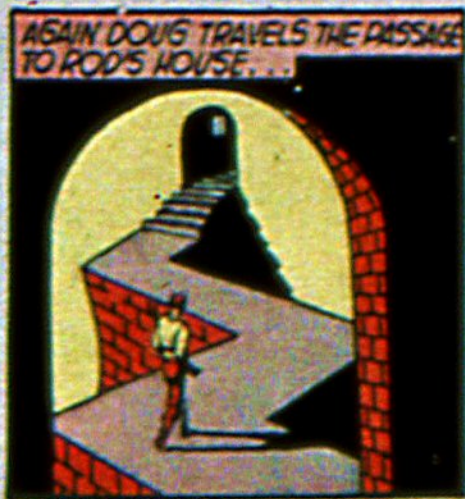


MY FATHER WAS INVOLVED IN ROD WING LOW'S SMUGGLING RING WHEN HE REFUSED TO CONTINUE THE HORRIBLE PRACTICES OF THE RING. ROD HAD HIM MURDERED! I HAVE BEEN IN DANGER EVER SINCE!



THE LOVELY HINDU GIRL LEADS DOUG THROUGH A PASSAGE LEADING FROM HER HOUSE TO ROD'S QUARTERS.





HASTILY SHE DASHES TO THE GARDEN WALL AND SUMMONS HELP.



THE STRANGE TWINS BATTLE FURIOUSLY; ONE FIGHTS FOR LAW AND DECENCY AND THE OTHER FOR CRIME AND DEGRADATION.



FINALLY ROD FORCES DOUG TO A LOW WINDOW BALCONY.



A SINISTER FIGURE STANDS PREPARED TO COMPLETE THE ATTACK.



BUT HIS MURDEROUS INTENT REMAINS UNFULFILLED!



AND ROD WING LOW IS TAKEN INTO CUSTODY.



OFFICERS YOU WILL FIND HIM GUILTY OF EVERY CRIME ON RECORD.

IN PRISON ROD'S CASE APPEARS HOPELESS TO HIM.



BUT NOT TO OLD WING LOW, WHO DODGES THE POLICE, AND IS ALREADY PREPARING ROD'S ESCAPE.



DOUG SAILS FOR ENGLAND.



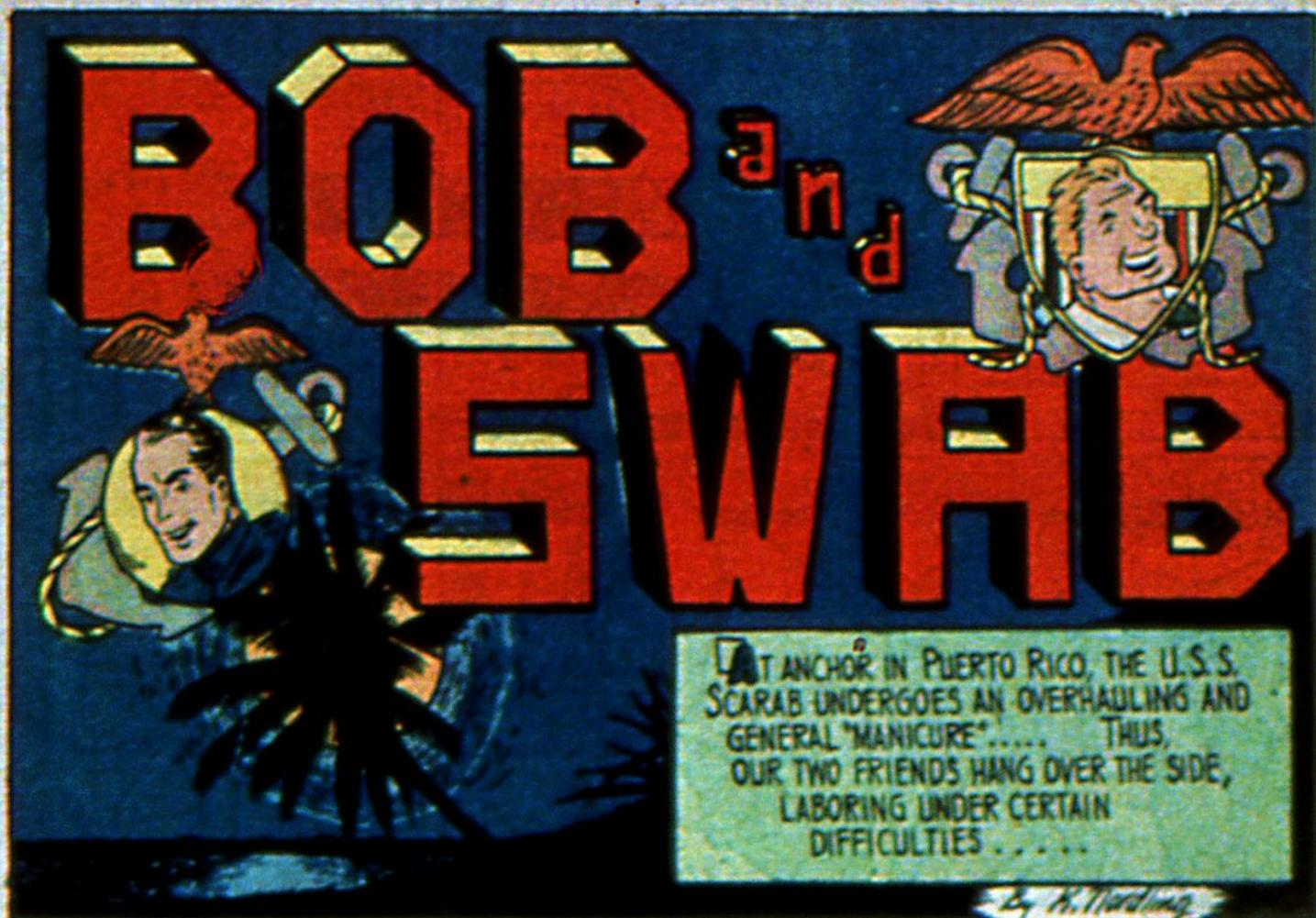
ROD WING LOW IS FINALLY WHERE HE BELONGS, BUT CAN THEY KEEP HIM THERE? I'VE A FEELING.

AT HOME...



FOR YOU, SWEETHEART! OH DOUG!

WHAT ADVENTURES BEFALL THE STRANGE TWINS NEXT MONTH?



JUST THEN THE BOSS'S MATE
PIPES HIS WHISTLE....



THERE! HEAR THAT? QUITTIN' TIME! YOU
WOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO SMELL MY
PIPE MUCH LONGER.

AW, DRY UP!



THE MEN ARE GIVEN LIBERTY
WHILE BOB AND SWAB TAKE UP
WHERE THEY LEFT OFF...







UNNOTICED, ONE OF THE CULPRITS SLINKS OUT OF THE ROOM



OUTSIDE THE DOOR, THE MAN FLIPS A SWITCH... ELECTRIFYING EVERY METAL OBJECT IN THE ROOM







IN ANSWER TO THEIR CALL, A NAVAL DETACHMENT SWARMS ONTO THE SCENE... AND TAKES INTO CUSTODY THE ENTIRE BAND OF FOREIGN AGENTS...





BY
Pad Docks

IN LOS ANGELES



CASEY, YOU'RE
WANTED IN THE
FREIGHT OFFICE

SERIOUS FACED OFFICIALS GREET HIM...



CASEY, YOU'RE TO CARRY
A VALUABLE CARGO THROUGH
TO CHICAGO! NOW... WE SUSPECT
THAT AN ATTEMPT WILL BE
MADE TO SABOTAGE THE RUN!



BUT THAT CARGO MUST GO
THROUGH AT ALL COSTS!
OTHERWISE, THE RAILROAD WILL
LOSE ONE OF ITS BIGGEST
FREIGHT ACCOUNTS AND AT
THIS POINT IT CAN'T
AFFORD IT!

THAT
CARGO WILL BE
DELIVERED ON
TIME, SIR!

A CROOK COVERTLY
WATCHES CASEY
AS HE LEAVES
THE OFFICE...



IN THE YARDS, HE IS APPROACHED
BY A TOUGH GANG.

IF YOU'LL STOP AT A WAY STATION AN'
LET US UNLOAD, WE'LL DIVIDE THE GOODS
WITH YOU, OR ELSE PAY YOU PRETTY!
HOW ABOUT IT?



HOW
ABOUT
IT??



A THUG CREEPS BEHIND CASEY!



CASEY IS KNOCKED OVER!



CASEY GRABS AN IRON PIPE AND TRIPS HIS ASSAILANT!



GUNS FLASH, SHOTS GO WILD!



FINALLY THE GANG FLEES IN A CLOUD OF SMOKE.



THE 77 ISN'T MY PET ENGINE, BUT THAT GANG DOESN'T KNOW IT!



THAT NIGHT!



THE LOADED CARS ARE HAULED AWAY BY AN OLD YARD ENGINE.



ON A SIDE TRACK WELL OUT IN THE COUNTRY, STANDS THE 94, CASEY'S FAVORITE ENGINE. THEY RE-LOAD THE GOODS ONTO ITS TRAIN.

BOY!! IF MY PLAN WORKS...



THE NEXT EVENING, CASEY PREPARES TO LEAVE ON HIS RUN.

HEY, YOU SWITCHMEN! KEEP THE TRACKS CLEAR! THERE MAY BE TROUBLE TONIGHT!



CASEY ENTERS THE CAB OF 77, IN A NEARBY FREIGHT CAR. THE CROOKS WATCH.



THAT SUCKER CASEY IS STARTING HIS RUN. HE'S JEST BEGGIN' FER TROUBLE!!

HE'LL GET IT, TH' DOPE!



SOON A BLACK CAR SPEEDS AFTER CASEY'S TRAIN.



CASEY SEES IT. JERKING THE THROTTLE WIDE OPEN, HE LETS HER GO!



WE'RE BEING FOLLOWED! DON'T LET 'EM SEE US JUMP!

WHEN THEY REACH THE 94, CASEY AND HIS CREW JUMP!



OVER THEY ROLL, DOWN A STEEP EMBANKMENT.



REGAINING THEIR FOOTING, THEY QUICKLY CLIMB INTO THE LOADED 94.



SO FAR, SO GOOD!

THE EMPTY 77
SHOOTS DOWN
THE TRACK...
AHEAD LIES A
HUGE BOMB
PLACED BY
THE CROOKS.



SUDDENLY - - -



THE ENGINE TOPPLES OVER - -



ANOTHER SECTION FALLS - -



SOME OF THE CARS ROLL DOWN THE
EMBANKMENT.



WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARS, THE CROOKS
RUSH FROM THEIR CAR, GUNS COCKED!



NO ONE'S HERE, THEY
MUST ALL BE KILLED!
SAVES US DOIN' IT!



THE CROOKS
ROLL BACK
THE CAR
DOORS. IN
DOING SO, A
NITROUS GAS
IS RELEASED.
IT PUTS THEM
IN A STUPOR.



AT THAT MOMENT, CASEY ROARS BY IN THE 94,
CARRYING THE VALUABLE GOODS!



CASEY IS JUBILANT AS HE ARRIVES IN CHICAGO WITH THE PRECIOUS CARGO. HE PHONES THE POLICE...

THIS IS CASEY JONES. I NEED A SQUAD TO TAKE WEST! NO TIME TO LOSE... THANKS!



LATER AT THE SCENE OF THE WRECK, THE CROOKS REVIVE. AS THEY TOTTER TO THEIR FEET, CASEY'S ENGINE BEARS DOWN UPON THEM WITH A DEAFENING ROAR...



THE GANG LEADER FLEES



HE CRASHES INTO A PARTLY OPENED CAR. CASEY DIVES AFTER HIM. THEY THRASH ABOUT LIKE WILD CATS!



SUDDENLY THE CAR LOOSENS. DOWN IT PLUNGES. THE CROOK IS STUNNED!



LATER, THE PRESIDENT OF THE ROAD HEAPS PRAISE UPON CASEY.

YOU'LL GET A BIG RAISE FOR YOUR HEROIC WORK, CASEY!

THANK YOU, SIR. I'M GLAD TO DO MY BIT TOWARD RIDDING THE COMMUNITY OF CRIMINALS!



COMING NEXT MONTH
A NEW ADVENTURE

Betty Bates
DON'T MISS IT!!!

THE CAT'S NINTH LIFE

By TONY BOON

I WAS afraid to go to sleep that night—afraid to turn out the light. For awhile I sat up in bed pretending to concentrate on a book and stroking the Baron's warm muzzle as he lay on the big bed close to me. The Baron was a magnificent German shepherd dog that I had picked up in Bavaria during one of my trips abroad. But even the trusty Baron wasn't reassuring to my touch. His fur was prickly with apprehension. His ears quivered and his right eye-brow was cocked in that anxious, questioning look that made him so human. He whined nervously at almost regular intervals and I soon had to slam my book down and talk to him.

"This is sheer nonsense, old boy," I said. "After twenty years, I return to my old home—a seasoned world traveler, having seen and done enough to fill a five foot shelf of books—and now, because of some foolish women's tales, I'm afraid to go to sleep in the very room that I spent my sheltered childhood!"

The Baron whined and shuddered. His ears stood up at attention and he glanced toward the window where the wind was brushing the branches of the old maple in a weird dance against the pane.

"You're a great help, my friend. Surely you don't believe my sister's wild stories about the Cat, do you? H'mmm maybe you

do. Well, it is something more than a coincidence when fifteen of one's relatives die from strange and unnatural causes within a few years . . . and always this mysterious cat-like figure that disappears into the dark, even after being shot at by rifles, automatics and a Police Captain's machine gun. Someone certainly has it in for the Blackstones. But why—why on earth should a respectable family like ours be subject to a murderer's designs?"

That I had only now heard of the strange deaths, after being welcomed home by my sister with a startled, "Oh, you're still alive!" when she opened the door for me, was due to the fact that I had not communicated with the family for over three years, merely an oversight on my part, and they naturally concluded that I had been one of the Cat's victims.

Suddenly I jumped out of bed and, followed closely by the Baron, raced across the hall and pounded on my sister's door.

"Jane! Jane! Remember the story father used to tell us about Great Uncle Gregory's cat?"

Jane squelched my excitement with an angry "Shhhhhh! You'll wake Aunt Margaret! Yes, we've dismissed that as superstitious nonsense that will lead us nowhere. Just because Uncle Gregory was viciously cruel to an animal that he seemed never to succeed in killing is no reason why his whole family should suffer. Go back to bed, now. Our generation hasn't been attacked

yet, only the older ones, so get some sleep."

"All right," I grumbled, "but Gregory's cat did die after the ninth attempt. Remember that! How many times has this mysterious cat-like figure been shot at?"

"We don't know. And you're talking utter nonsense—what's happened to you on your gallivanting trips around the world, have you lost your reason?"

I went back to bed thinking that perhaps she was right, and wondering how I could be capable of such fantastic notions.

But I had no sooner crept beneath the covers and pulled them a little higher around my ears than usual, when a piercing shriek sent an electrifying chill down my spinal column and I found myself standing in the middle of the room, rigid with fear. The Baron whimpered at my feet, his bristling fur brushing against my bare legs. For a split second I stood there, then gathered my courage and raced out. Jane, almost paralyzed with terror was in the hall. She forced the words from her throat and nodded toward the door at the top of the staircase.

"Aunt Margaret—in—in—there."

She thrust a gun into my hand as I started toward the room. But we both seemed to know it was a futile gesture. As I turned the knob, a low, feline snarl came from the other side of the door—then a hissing spit. I am not ashamed to admit that I was shaking down to my toes.

But, somehow, I managed to

open that door and step into the moonlit room. There, sharply silhouetted against the window loomed the nightmare figure of the Cat! It was no myth—this hideous giant, whose body was that of a powerful, full shouldered man with long, slim legs and hands extended at his sides in claw-like gesture, but whose head bore the upright ears of a cat, the suspicion of fur and long straight whiskers, and in the dark, the glowing embers of yellow, green eyes! It was actually there, before me, nothing in my imagination could conjure up such a shape!

It made no move and I commanded the Baron to my side. But the faithful dog was in a state of confused terror. He shivered in the corner and would not, for the first time in his life, obey me. The Baron, who had risked his life to save me from drowning and from attacks of robbers in the past had met with something that even his brave heart could not endure to face. I heard him slink fearfully out of the room.

Then I pulled the trigger. I heard the shot and saw the yellow jet of flame. But the diabolical figure did not fall. A howl rose from its throat that echoed through the house and diminished to a sort of fiendish laughter. Then I heard the Cat's voice—the most blood-curdling sound that any human ear could listen to and live. It was like the rasping of iron files on a non-resisting substance.

"Remember, the Cat has nine lives. I will be back again. Soon."

And with that, he leapt though the window and vanished. I hardly remembered the events that followed that ghastly night. Somehow, the horribly mutilated body of Aunt Margaret was disposed of. Somehow, Jane and I managed to live through the next

week and still keep our wits intact.

The Baron, poor fellow, was ashamed to face me, but at last I made him understand that I was not disappointed in him and that I shared his great terror.

It was precisely a week later that Jane, the Baron, and I were sitting together in the living room talking to keep up our spirits—we never retired till long past midnight after the Cat's visit—when we heard a scratching on the window pane. Jane and I stared up at each other's white face and our frightened eyes said, "We're next."

As I heard the window behind me opening slowly, I pulled out the gun that I still carried with some vague hope that some day it would not prove useless. I tried to rise to face the monster, but could not. Jane and I were both frozen to our chairs. We heard the Cat slinking behind us and in another moment it stood in a shadowed corner before our very eyes. The chilling whisper cut to our very marrow as he spit between his long, gleaming teeth.

"The gun will not help you. You should have learned that before. If you try to use it this

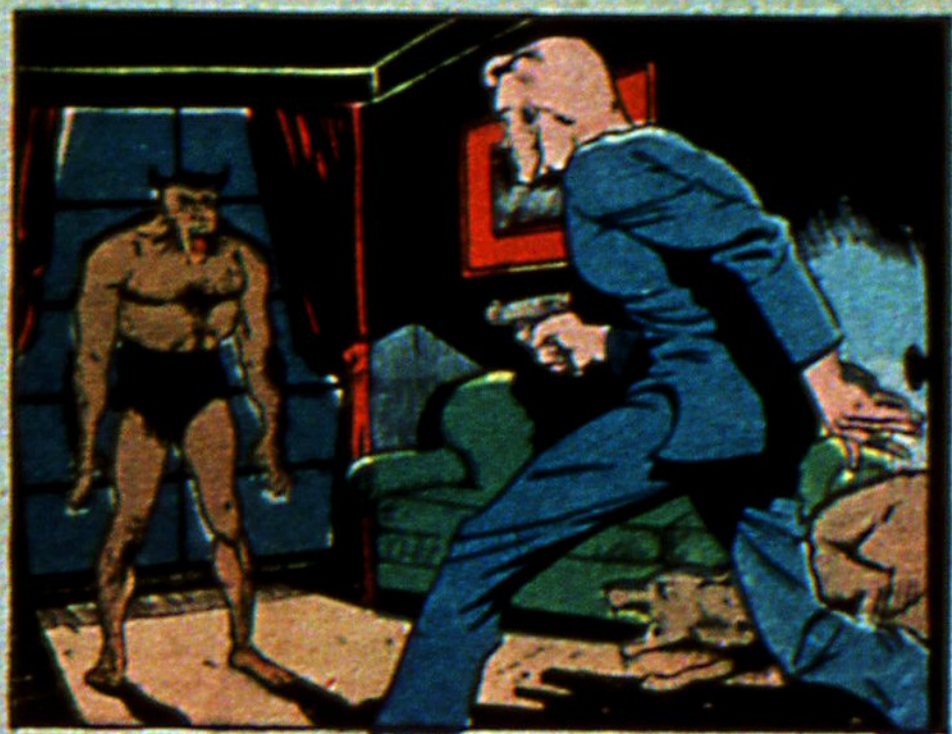
time, I will only prolong the agony of your death. The Cat has nine lives."

Up to then I had not been aware of the Baron's actions. But suddenly I realized that he was not at all the frightened dog of the previous week. He stood by my side growling fiercely, his fine, sharp teeth bared for action, his body tensed for a spring.

As the Cat took a long, menacing step toward us, the Baron charged forward, leapt upon the massive chest and buried his wolf-like fangs in the creature's neck. The hideous claws tore at the Baron's throat. A wild, anguished cry rent the air, but in a moment the black monster collapsed and a low, tortured hiss was the last sound to escape him.

The blood from the Baron's wound ran red over my hands and arms, but in my hysterical relief, I could only weep for joy and hold the dog close to me.

"Only you, old fellow—only you could know that this was the Cat's last chance—that he'd come to the end and was bluffing it. Only you realized that he'd lost his eight lives, that this was his ninth—and you took it from him!"

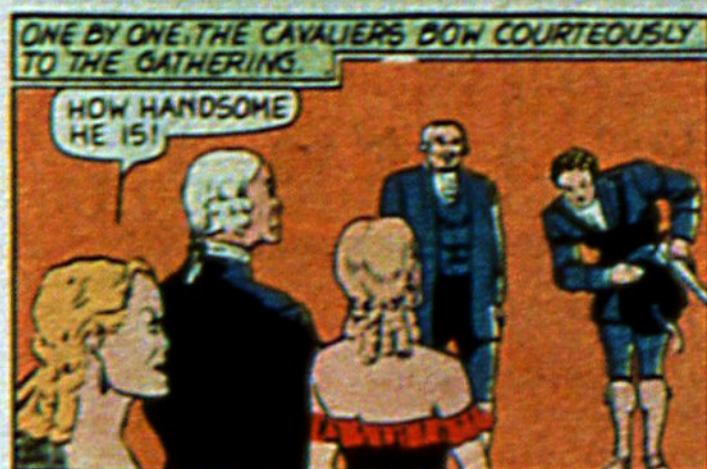


The Old Witch

tells the tale of the
ghost cavaliers

By
PIERRE
WINTER



FESTIVITIES OVER, THE GUESTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO LEAVE. INSTEAD THEY ARE SENT TO BED IN THE VAST BEDROOMS.



FAR INTO THE NIGHT, RESTLESS GUESTS PLOT.



AFTER DECIDING TO LEAVE THE PREMISES, THE GUESTS SNEAK DOWN THE STAIRS TO THE MAIN CORRIDOR.





INVESTIGATION CONTINUES IN THE BALLROOM.
EACH GUEST IS QUESTIONED.



YOU MAY STOP ASKING
QUESTIONS. I MURDERED
OUR HOST!



THE CAVALIERS COULD NOT
KILL A LIVING MAN...
I WAS THEIR
TOOL!



THEY GAVE ME A DAGGER. I
KILLED HIM WITH THAT.



I DID NOT KNOW
WHAT I WAS DOING!



BUT THE GUARDSMAN DOUBTS
HER STORY.



HAW! THAT IS
THE BEST
FAIRY TALE
I EVER
HEARD!

SUDDENLY...



SO YOU DON'T
BELIEVE IN GHOSTS! YOU
CAN START BELIEVING
NOW!

AND IF YOU CONVICT THAT
GIRL, I'LL HAUNT YOU FOR
THE REST OF
YOUR LIFE!



NOW GET OUT!



YOU ARE
FREE, MY
DAUGHTER!



YES MOTHER.
IT WAS A
NIGHTMARE
OR A DREAM!

I TELL NO MORE. PERHAPS IT
WAS A DREAM... PERHAPS
OUR LADY MET HER
CAVALIER AGAIN.
SOMEWHERE...
WHO KNOWS?



ON THE NEXT ISSUE THE OLD WITCH
SPINS AN EERIE YARN THAT WILL
SEND SHIVERS DOWN YOUR SPINE!

BLAZE BARTON

WHEN THE BURNING SUN DESTROYED THE EARTH IN THE YEAR 50029, THE ONLY PERSONS WHO SURVIVED WERE IN PROFESSOR SOLIS' HEAT PROOF CITADEL. LED BY BLAZE BARTON, SOLIS' ASSISTANT, AND AVIS, HIS DAUGHTER, THE PARCHED EARTH WAS RECAPTURED FROM THE MONSTERS WHO CAME UP FROM THE DEPTHS TO GLOAT AMONG THE RUINS. AND NOW...

By Roy Talon

NOW THAT THE FISSURE IS UNDER OUR GUNS, WE CAN OPEN A PASSAGEWAY.

BUT WHY, PROFESSOR?

MY IDEA IS TO EXPLORE THE EARTH RIGHT DOWN TO ITS CENTER.

GIANT CRANES AND DRILLS BORE A TUNNEL IN THE FISSURE.

BENEATH THE INNER EDGE OF THE FISSURE, BLAZE DISCOVERS A BOTTOMLESS ABYSS.

I'LL FIRE A WARNING SHOT TO CLEAR THE MONSTERS OUT!

I'LL SEE HOW FAR DOWN THIS CRACK EXTENDS.



DESCENDING, THE SPHERE PASSES THROUGH STRATA AFTER STRATA OF STRANGE LIFE. LEERING MUD MONSTERS, FIERCE ROCK MEN, PRETTY PEOPLE OF THE JEWELLED CAVES.



THE EXPLORERS HAVE REACHED THE EXACT CENTER OF THE EARTH. BEFORE THEY CAN EVEN THINK, A "RECEPTION COMMITTEE" OF FIERCE CORE CREATURES IS UPON THEM.





AT FIRST THE PRETTY PEOPLE FLEE, BUT AVIS' BEAUTY SOON WINS THEIR CONFIDENCE.



BLAZE AND AVIS ARE INTRODUCED TO BEATICA, QUEEN OF THE JEWELLED CAVES.

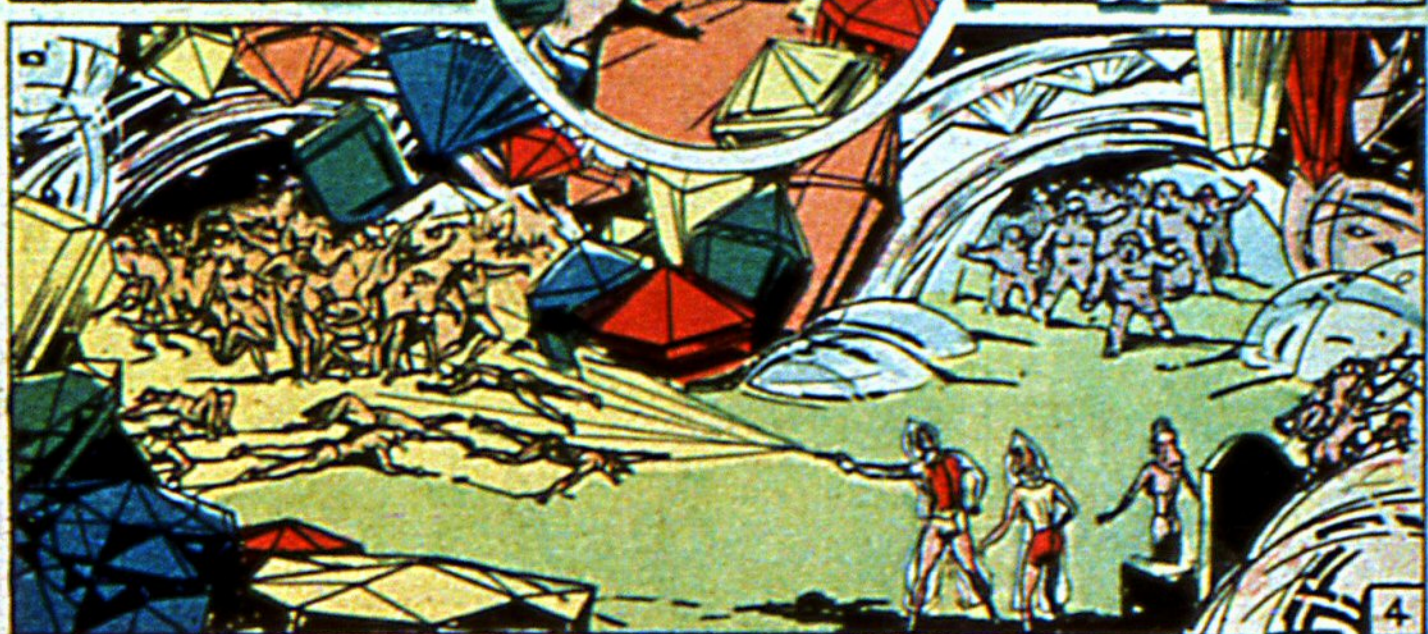


WE LIVE IN CONSTANT FEAR OF THE CORE CREATURES. SO FAR, WE HAVE WON ONLY BECAUSE WE'VE PITTED THE DULL-WITTED ROCK MEN AGAINST THEM, BUT THEY'LL NOT AID US LONG!



EVEN NOW, TROUBLE BREWS FOR THE PRETTY PEOPLE.

BLAZE SENDS AN S.O.S. ON HIS WRIST RADIO.



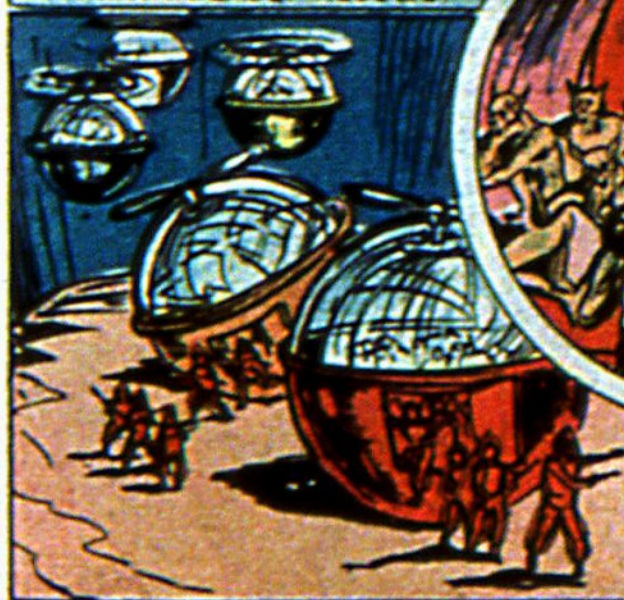
ON THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH, PROFESSOR SOUS PREPARES A RELIEF EXPEDITION.



STEP BY STEP, THE PRETTY PEOPLE ARE FORCED TO THE EDGE OF THE CHASM, WHERE BLAZE MAKES A DESPERATE STAND.



THE RESCUE PARTY GETS TO WORK WITH DEADLY RESULTS.



TAKE THESE JEWELS IN PAYMENT FOR YOUR HELP.

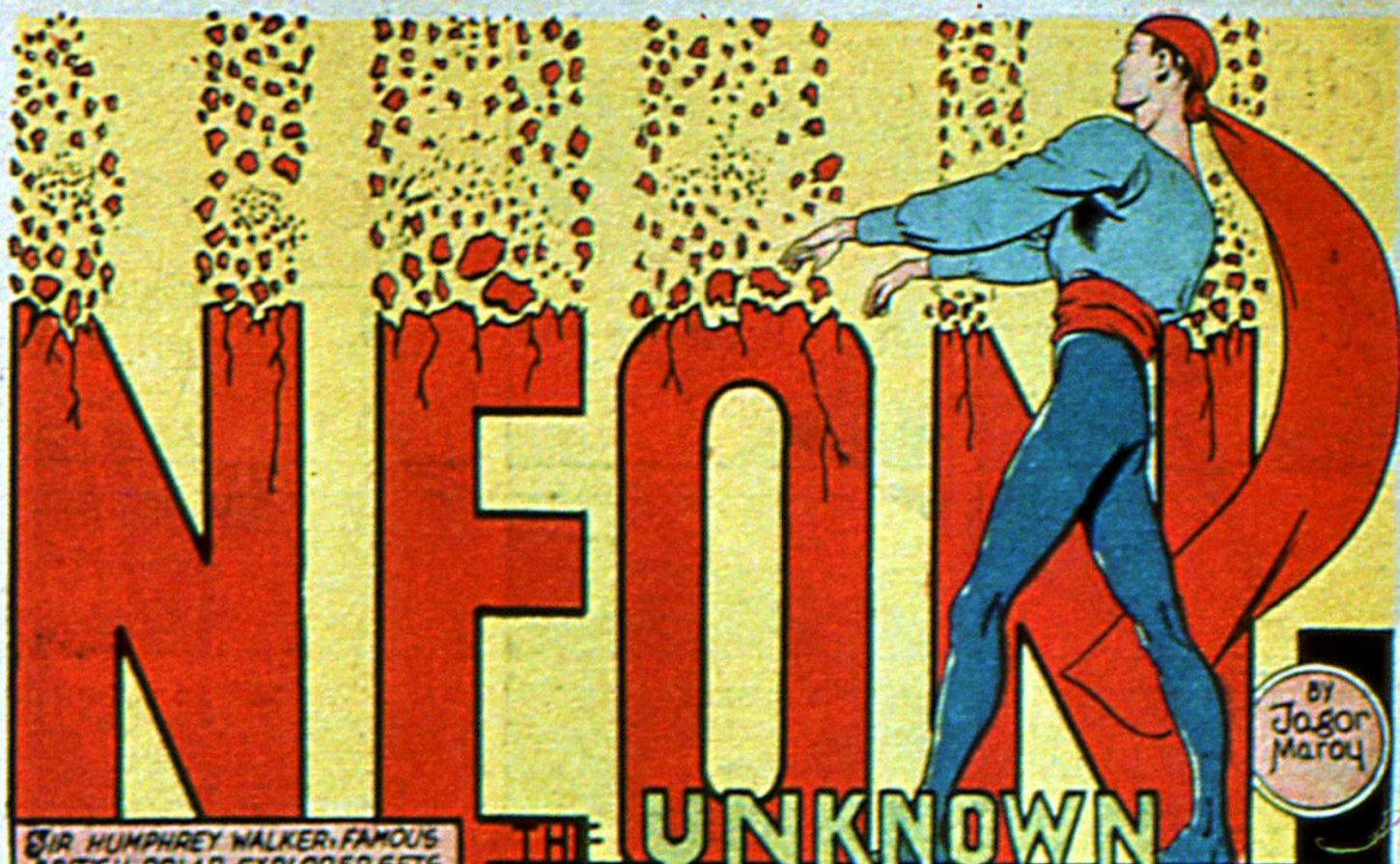
NO THANKS, BUT YOU TAKE THIS WEAPON, WITH IT YOU'LL BE SAFE.



AN AMAZING NEW ADVENTURE AWAITS BLAZE BARTON IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF BOB! @@@@ DON'T MISS IT.



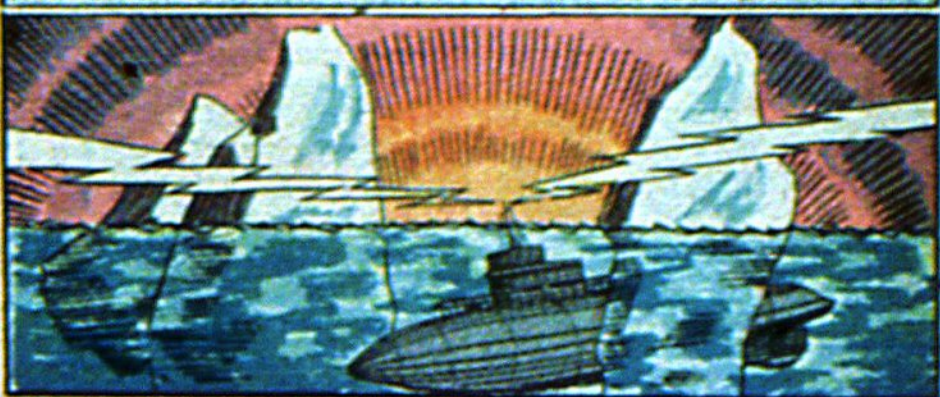




by
Jagor
Marou

SIR HUMPHREY WALKER, FAMOUS BRITISH POLAR EXPLORER, SETS OUT ON A DARING EXPEDITION TO THE NORTH POLE...

AS HIS SUBMARINE GLIDES THROUGH THE ICY WATERS OF THE BARREN WASTE, SIR HUMPHREY SENDS REGULAR REPORTS OF PROGRESS TO THE NAVAL BASE IN THE UNITED STATES.



ONE DAY

NO MESSAGE FROM THE POLE FOR TWELVE HOURS, SIR. WE CANNOT CONTACT SIR HUMPHREY!

TRY AGAIN!

ALL COMMUNICATIONS ARE FRUITLESS. SEARCHING PARTIES ARE SENT TO THE POLE.

NO SIGN ANYWHERE!

WEEKS OF LIFE-RISKING PENETRATION INTO THE FROZEN ZONE BRING NOTHING BUT DESPAIR. HOPE FOR THE EXPLORER IS ABANDONED.



BUT ONE MYSTERIOUS FIGURE REMAINS TO TACKLE THE ALMOST HOPELESS TASK. NEON, THE UNKNOWN.



ON A FLASHING NEONIC DISTANCE BEAM, HE FLIES NORTHWARD.



HIS UNCANNY POWER GUIDES HIM TO A SPOT WITHIN A FEW MILES OF THE MAGNETIC POLE.



BORING A SHAFT THROUGH SOLID ICE, NEON LANDS IN A STRANGE CAVERN IN THE MIDST OF A FERTILE TROPICAL ISLE.



SUDDENLY..



AN ENGLISH VOICE!



NEON COMES UPON A BAND OF SCREECHING SAVAGES, INTENT ON THEIR MURDEROUS DESIRE.



THEIR ANIMAL-LIKE INSTINCTS WARN OF A STRANGER'S PRESENCE. FIERCELY THEY TURN ON NEON.



APPARENTLY THEY DON'T LIKE STRANGERS UNDER THE ICE.



I SUPPOSE YOU CAME TO RESCUE ME. NOW WE'RE BOTH IN A FLUX!

DON'T WORRY, SIR HUMPHREY.

NEON DISCHARGES A POWERFUL RAY FROM HIS FINGERTIPS...



AND GREAT CHUNKS OF THE ICE CEILING HURTLE DOWN UPON THE NATIVES' HEADS.



IN MORTAL TERROR, THEY FLEE TOWARD THE DENSE WOODS...



NICELY DONE OLD CHAR BUT THOSE FREAKS ARE NOT THE ONLY THINGS WE HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT. LISTEN, DO YOU HEAR THOSE ROARS?



LOOK THERE! THEY ARE THE ANIMAL INHABITANTS OF THIS FANTASTIC PLACE!



THE LUMBERING MONSTERS, BELLOWING MENACINGLY, CHARGE UPON THE BOUND MEN...



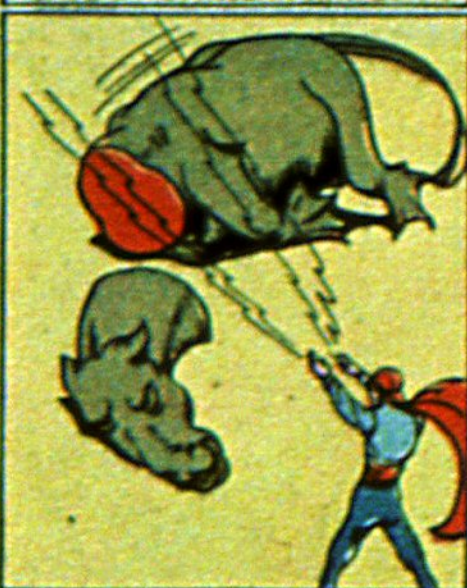
RUN FOR THE WOODS! I'LL TAKE CARE OF THESE PETS!



NEON DARTS AMONG THE BEASTS WITH LIGHTNING-LIKE SPEED...



THIS NEONIC RAY SEVERS THEIR HEADS LIKE A CLEAN KNIFE.



THE GIGANTIC CREATURES ARE PARALYZED WITH BEWILDERMENT.



THE NEONIC RAYS REDUCE THEM TO A STATE OF HARMLESS TIMIDITY...



NOW, LET'S GET AWAY BEFORE THE LITTLE MEN COME BACK!



BUT THEIR ESCAPE IS BLOCKED BY THE GIBBERING SAVAGES WHO RETURN WITH CRUDE STONE AGE MALLET.



NEON FLASHES A RAY LADDER UPON WHICH SIR HUMPHREY REACHES A TREE TOP...



YOU SHOULD BE IN A MUSEUM INSTEAD OF HERE PLAYING WITH STONE TOYS!



A SAVAGES ATTACK IS MET BY A GIGANTIC BLAZING FIST.



ANOTHER CREEPS STEALTHILY UP BEHIND NEON.



BUT HIS STONE HAMMER SHATTERS BEFORE IT CAN STRIKE.



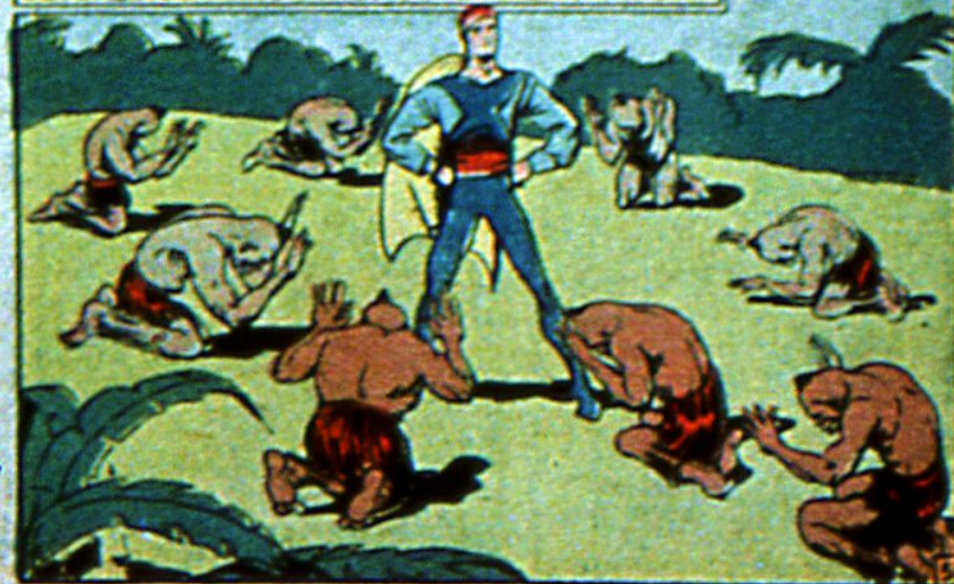
AWED BY THIS DISPLAY OF THE SUPERNATURAL, THE NATIVES DROP THEIR WEAPONS AND GAPE AT NEON.



UNBELIEVABLE!



WITH THEIR MUMBLED CHANTS, THEY FALL TO THEIR KNEES BEFORE NEON WHOM THEY WORSHIP AS AN IDOL.



I-I CAN'T BELIEVE MY EYES, SIR! YOU HAVE TAMED THE BEASTS AND MEN OF THIS SAVAGE ISLE WHY YOU'VE MADE IT A VERITABLE PARADISE!



THERE IS EVERYTHING HERE TO MAKE THIS AN IDEAL SPOT TO LIVE OUT THE REST OF MY LIFE IN PEACE AND QUIET!



IF YOU'LL STAY WITH ME TO KEEP THE NATIVES IN CHECK...



WELL, I MIGHT STOP BY ONCE IN AWHILE, BUT...

SUDDENLY A THUNDERING CRACK SOUNDS IN THE ICE CEILING ABOVE THEM.



WHAT WAS THAT?

SCREAMING NATIVES DASH IN ALL DIRECTIONS AS THEIR SKY BEGINS TO FALL...



NEON'S POWERS ENABLE HIM TO UNDERSTAND THE JUMBLED SOUNDS OF NATIVE SPEECH.



SKY BREAK AGAIN! MANY KILLED... SKY ANGRY MANY TIMES!

THE TERRIFIC IMPACT OF FALLING GLACIAL ICE ROCKS SHIVERS THE SMALL ISLAND.



SIR HUMPHREY IS PINNED
BENEATH THE CRUSHING WEIGHT.



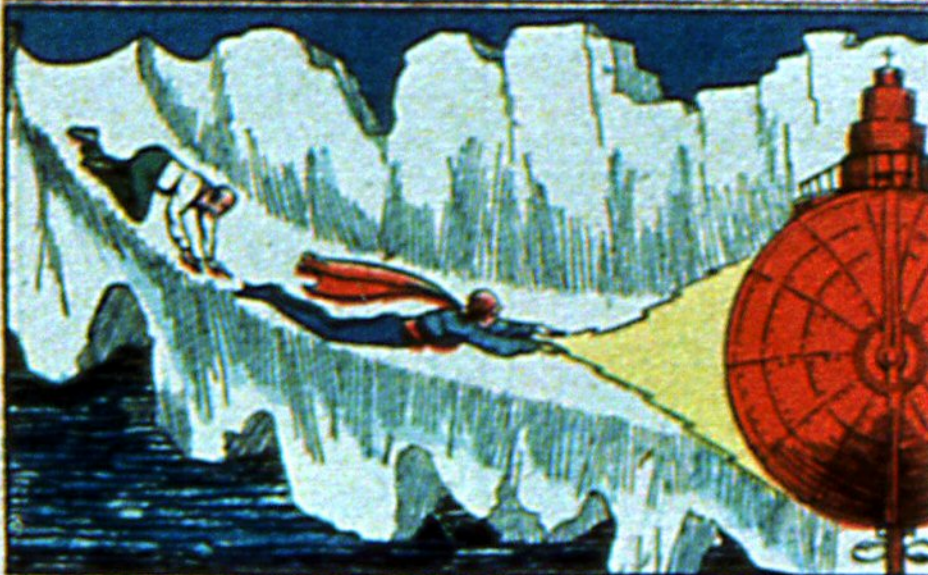
NEON SPLITS THE HUGE
CAKES WITH A HEAT RAY.



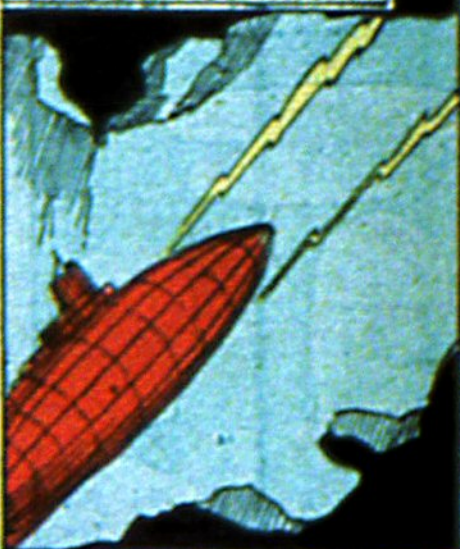
FROM WHAT THE NATIVE
SAID, I GATHER THIS IS
A COMMON OCCURRENCE.
WHERE'S YOUR SUB?
WE'RE
LEAVING!



CUTTING A SMOOTH TUNNEL THROUGH THE THICK GLACIER, NEON
LEADS THE WAY TO SIR HUMPHREY'S ICE-LOCKED SUBMARINE.



ANOTHER POWERFUL NEONIC
BEAM OFFERS AN OPENING
TO THE SEA'S SURFACE...



THEN... CIVILIZATION AND A
FAIR CLIMATE AT LAST.



WHAT DID YOU
FIND AT
THE POLE,
SIR?

NOTHING BUT
SNOW AND ICE
BOYS... NOTHING
BUT SNOW AND
ICE!

WHAT?
NO
FOSSILS?



WELL, SIR HUMPHREY, I
GUESS WE CAN CALL
THAT 'PARADISE' WELL
LOST!

RIGHTO!



NEON THE UNKNOWN, WILL BE
BACK WITH MORE STARTLING AND
FANTASTIC ADVENTURES IN NEXT
MONTH'S ISSUE OF HIT COMICS.

Read THE BLACK CONDOR

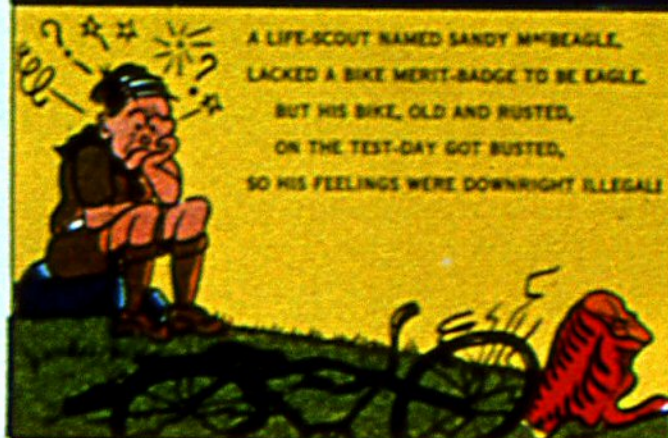
*The Man
Who Can
Fly!*



Also
IN
CRACK
COMICS
EACH
MONTH

Each
Month
in **CRACK**
COMICS

THE
CLOCK,
ALIAS THE SPIDER,
JANE ARDEN, THE
SPACE LEGION,
MADAM FATAL, NED
BRANT, WIZARD
WELLS ~ AND
MANY
OTHERS



A LIFE-SCOUT NAMED SANDY McBEAGLE,
LACKED A BIKE MERIT-BADGE TO BE EAGLE.
BUT HIS BIKE, OLD AND RUSTED,
ON THE TEST-DAY GOT BUSTED,
SO HIS FEELINGS WERE DOWNRIGHT ILLEGAL!



NOW, HIS DAD, A BIG SCOTSMAN, AND THIRTY-
AT THE STORE SAW A BIKE REALLY NIFTY—
SAID: "O' COORSE, LAD, 'TIS NICE,
"BUT, HOOT NOW, SEE THE PRICE!
"WHY, I CANNA PAY THOT FOR A GIFTIE!"



BUT THE CLERK KNEW WITH WHOM HE WAS DEALING,
SO, HIS WINK AT YOUNG SANDY CONCEALING,
HE REMARKED TO McBEAGLE,
WITH MANNER QUITE REGAL,
"THE PRICE, SIR, INCLUDES THE FREE-WHEELING!"



NOW THAT MEANT A COASTER-BRAKE, MERELY—
A MORROW, WHICH RIDERS PRIZE DEARLY!
BUT "FREE" WAS ENOUGH
TO SELL THE SCOT TOUGH,
SO ALL THREE WERE CONTENTED, SINCERELY!

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THE RAY

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